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### The House of Bernarda Alba, newspaper

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## —It's All In The Backstage—

By SUSAN WILLIAMS

Perhaps the most over-worked, underhailed people of the theater are those who work "backstage," making sets, making up the actors, and providing props, bringing the play to life. Well over half the work in a dramatic production is done by these weary wayfarers of the stage, the "Little People."

MSU's Blackfriars, like every other institution of dramatic art, has its little people, too. They have been working on the production opening Nov. 11, "The House of Bernarda Alba."

### "Black Hole"

Most of their work is performed in a spacious but crowded room under the YMCA and Post Office known as the "Black Hole of Cunetto," named for the Blackfriars director, Dr. Dominic Cunetto. Here the set is built and co-ordinated with the other elements of the backstage: lighting, costumes, make-up, sound, and props.

Diane Herring, president of Blackfriars and member of Alpha Psi Omega dramatic fraternity, is technical director of the set shop. Miss Herring, better known as "Tooty," does much of the manual labor herself.

Sets are made of muslin stretched over wood frames and painted usually to represent walls. Doors and windows are made in much the same manner as doors and windows are made in real houses.

Foliage is usually made from "borders" of canvas painted green, and other parts of the set are made from painted paper-

mache. There are usually at least two ways to make almost anything needed onstage to represent something in real life.

Assistants in the set shop this fall have been Pat Kelly, president of the dramatics fraternity, and Tommy Fain, a transfer from Shawamba Junior College. "Actually," said Miss Herring, "the shop is open to anyone who is interested, not just Blackfriars members. We always need help because there is so much to be done for one production."

Terry Galey, in charge of lighting for the "Bernarda Alba" production, commented that backstage work is really more interesting than being onstage. "You meet more people and it's a more relaxed atmosphere."

The set for "The House of Bernarda Alba" was designed by Dr. Robert Anderson of the speech and drama department. The setting, explained Dr. Anderson, is in rural Spain and most of the action takes place indoors, so the majority of the set is made to represent massive stucco walls with arched windows and doors.

### Little Color

"The set is a little unusual because it's almost all off-white in color. Most sets use more color."

Sandra Clark, also a member of Alpha Psi Omega and a member of

the cast, is wardrobe mistress for the production. Most of the costumes, Miss Clark commented, are rich dark colors in taffetas, brocades and cottons.

"Most of the props for this production consist of furniture; heavy, elegant, massive furniture. It's beautiful and fits the play perfectly," said Jo Nelle Smith, props manager.

Co-ordinating the sound effects for the play is David Cardwell, announcer for WSSO radio and a speech major.

The set is due to go on stage the first part of this week and will be complete with lights, sound, costumes, and props by dress rehearsal Nov. 10. The drama by Federico Lorca is scheduled for Nov. 11-13 in Lee Hall Auditorium at 8 p.m. Tickets will be on sale in the Union beginning Nov. 9, and at the door.



**FORGOTTEN BUNCH**—Often the hardest working members of a stage production are the people behind the scenes. Involved in preparations for the upcoming Blackfriars production "The House of Bernarda Alba" are (left to right) Billy Williamson, Pat Kelly, Tommy Fain, Diane "Tooty" Herring, and Terry Galey. (Photo by Brumfield)